

THE Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION SINCE 1877

BRIEFS

RUGBY OPENS DOORS FOR CHURCHES IN U.K.

LONDON (BP) — As rugby attracts attention around the globe during the sport's 2015 World Cup, churches in the United Kingdom are using the event to draw people together, build relationships, and reach their communities for Christ.

"The reason why we've thrown [this rugby party] is largely just to create a presence in the community," said Rev. Ross Gunderson of St. Barnabas Church of England in Dulwich, London. "I think quite often churches can be a lot of things, but yet, they're not always a voice for just the community-building event."

ALASKA BAPTISTS HIT 70-YEAR MARK

PALMER, Alaska (BP) — Constancy, change and unity all were part of the 70th annual meeting of the Alaska Baptist Convention, Sept. 28-30 at First Baptist Church in Palmer.

Seventeen pastors were recognized for having between 15 and 28 years of ministry in Alaska, and Executive Director Mike Procter received a resolution of appreciation from Ashley Clayton of the SBC Executive Committee for Procter's 30 years in Alaska. Procter has announced he plans to retire May 1, 2016.

FANTASY SPORTS BETTING INVESTIGATED

NASHVILLE (BP) — As news breaks of a federal investigation into the fantasy sports industry, Baptist commentators warn that betting in fantasy leagues is not harmless fun.

The Wall Street Journal reported Oct. 14 that the Federal Bureau of Investigation is "investigating [the] daily fantasy sports business model" to see if it violates federal law. A front-page story in the Oct. 15 New York Times stated the fantasy website DraftKings appears to be the focus of the probe, with rival site FanDuel also potentially facing scrutiny and the entire industry confronting accusations of "predatory tactics" and improper handling of insider information.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Miss. abortion law hearing coming soon?

WASHINGTON (BP and local reports) — The fate of multiple abortion clinics, including the only abortion facility left in Mississippi, awaits the consideration of the U.S. Supreme Court.

The high court will have the opportunity to decide this term, which opened Oct. 5, whether state governments may enact rules that result in shutting down most abortion clinics or even the only one remaining in the state. An affirmative ruling would mean Jackson Women's Health Organization on North State Street in Jackson would be required to meet state rules or shut down.

However, there would still be a number of storefront outlets and clinics across the state that will continue to refer women for out-of-state abortions.

The U.S. Supreme Court has yet to decide whether it will review rulings by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans on abortion regulations enacted by Mississippi and Texas, but the uncertainty is expected to end soon. The high court is likely to make a decision about whether to accept appeals of the lower-court decisions during its conference Nov. 6, according to the anti-abortion Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) in Scottsdale, Ariz.

ADP senior counsel Steven Aden told Baptist Press (BP) in



JACKSON WOMEN'S HEALTH ORGANIZATION

an Oct. 12 telephone interview that he is "more hopeful that the Supreme Court will take these abortion cases, or at least one of them, than I have been in a while."

The justices' interest has been signaled by the fact they have scheduled the Mississippi case for conference seven

times beginning in the spring, Aden said. Also, it's time for another ruling on abortion, he told BP.

The high court has not issued an opinion on abortion since 2007, when it upheld the federal ban on partial-birth abortion. "[T]hat's the longest dry spell I'm aware of for the Su-

preme Court not to have taken an abortion case, so it's way overdue," said Aden, who is also director of ADF's Center for Life Alliances.

The Mississippi law, among other items, requires abortion doctors to have admitting

see COURT on p. 6

2015 GROWING CHURCHES CONFERENCE

Harrisburg Church, Tupelo, hosted the 2015 Growing Churches Conference Aug. 7-8. Over 485 people attended part of the conference, representing 88 different churches.

Including faculty members, Harrisburg volunteers, choirs etc., there were over 560 total participants. Worship rally leaders were Thom Ranier, president and CEO, LifeWay, Nashville (shown); and Aaron

Tomes, minister of music, Harrisburg Church. Co-chairmen for the event were Tim Alexander, minister of education, Harrisburg Church; and Marc D. Howard, director, Lee/Itawamba Associations.

(photo special for

The Baptist Record)



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From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

Troubled waters

We live in a time of "emerging" churches, "satellite campuses," and "blended" worship services. Some churches have dropped "Baptist" from their names, and some now refer to Sunday School not as Sunday School but such things as "Life Groups." That is, if they haven't dropped Sunday School altogether in favor of small home meetings during the week.

"We don't have a worship service at my church any longer. We have an entertainment hour," lamented a Mississippi Baptist not long ago. "My pastor doesn't even bring his Bible to the pulpit on Sunday," said Mississippi Baptist from the other side of the state. "All we hear are lectures on pop culture and 'feel-good-about-yourself,' Joel Osteen-style messages." (Osteen is a popular TV preacher and author from a Word of Faith background in Houston, Texas.)

It's safe to say that the Christian church has undergone a few changes over its 2,000-year history. The church has adapted to circumstances, good and bad. Some of those changes turned out well, and some were mistakes (to say the least). Many of the good ideas served a purpose and were retired after a very long, useful life. Many of the bad ideas have come and gone, too. Some of the good has stuck around, as has some of the bad.

The point is that while all change is not good, change is not entirely bad, either. In some of the examples above, people have taken change too far in an effort to respond to cultural pressures they are apparently feeling. Such cultural pressure is not isolated to Mississippi Baptists or Southern Baptists.

The Episcopal Church in America, for another example, decided a few years ago to condone and openly support the elevation of minister Eugene Robinson, a practicing homosexual with a live-in lover, to lead the Diocese of New Hampshire. Many of the member denominations of the worldwide Anglican Communion, of which the Episcopal Church in America

is a member, have condemned that decision but the Episcopal Church in America has been steadfast in its decision to bend to cultural pressure in this important area of our mutual Christian witness.

Since then, Episcopalians have opened wide their doors to virtually anyone, regardless of biblical strictures, by claiming themselves to be an "affirming church." Not to pick on Episcopalians, but theirs is a cautionary narrative for Southern Baptists and Mississippi Baptists.

These are troubled waters we are presently attempting to navigate. It would be easy to simply say change is good — because it often is — but we must in all things guard against the watering down of the central message of our faith in the name of change. Namely, that a loving and just God chose to reveal Himself through His Son Jesus Christ, so that all who believe can be saved and enjoy eternal life with Him in Heaven (John 3:16).

There are manifold ways to deliver that simple message to a lost world. The problem is that too many of us have gone too far afield, complicating and even adulterating the message in a compromise to get people in the door.

There's nothing wrong with conducting a Saturday evening worship service, but it is wrong to tell people there may indeed be avenues open to God other than a profession of faith in Jesus Christ. There's nothing wrong with drums and electric guitars in church, but it is wrong to say that sin and the eternal damnation sin brings are outmoded or discredited concepts.

The lists and the arguments about the lists could go on and on, but one point we must never forget in our rush to temporize all things religious: Hell is hot, Heaven is sweet, and Jesus saves.

Let's make sure a lost world hears that message loud and clear, both by our words and deeds. The rest will take care of itself.

Use shorter words

Can you name the 16-letter word that begins with the prefix, "ir," and means, "lacking a sense of responsibility"? You guessed it! Irresponsibility. It's a long word with an even longer history that should make us think about how to live a responsible life which pleases God.

Personal irresponsibility (PI) dominates our society. Ever watch any of those "Made for TV" court shows that are so popular? I cannot make it through one case. Ridiculous PI permeates these situations.

What has happened to American life? If PI was a disease, all of us would be exposed to it. Like most diseases, the people who have it may not recognize it and those who do probably wouldn't admit having it. Pay attention daily and count the number of PI cases you detect.

This sickness begins early in life. A basic responsibility exists that each of us has to exercise in being a member of the human race and living in a civilized society. Early on, we may fail in some basic responsibility that we owe another or ourselves.

This early failure brings a sense of guilt, an emotion that we moderns are taught to hide or deny. Rather than confess and accept responsibility, we learn that it is easier to blame in an attempt to transfer our guilt to another. If we are allowed to be irresponsible or blame, we learn there are few negative consequences in life. PI becomes the norm and fewer people exercise any accountability and bear the weight of responsibility.

Should not followers of Jesus Christ be highly responsible men and women? In the university of life, a PI fraternity and sorority exist. The membership requirements are quite harmless and do not call for any genuine exercise of the heart, soul, body, or mind. If a member fails in some way, pervasive irresponsibility blames others and is applauded.

The numbers of people who suffer from PI grow at a high rate. The ripple effect is causing an epidemic. Can such an illness be corrected, cured, or changed? Yes. Of course, the cure is not popular with those who are sick, as no remedy ever is. Sadly, we don't have a Center for Disease Control to consult on this major epidemic. The only remedy is the Cross of Jesus Christ and faithful fellowship to Him.

The cure involves a new attitude about what is important and a sense of propriety and decorum about why something must be done a certain way. It also involves reassessing who and what is important in life. Fi-



Guest opinion
with Matt Buckles

nally, the cure must cause one to take stock about the long-term consequences of PI.

This new attitude must be accompanied by a new set of Christian values that cannot be bought a local store. These needed new values include, but are not limited to: respect, integrity, kindness, industriousness, thrift, honesty, and tact. If we follow these values with a new attitude and with God's help, personal responsibility will be the new owner of our homes, hearts, and hands.

Am I describing something that has become impossible in our day? No. Many men and women of all ages and walks of life can move away from irresponsibility toward responsibility. It is heart-warming to watch an individual evolve from a person unwilling to admit having PI to a person whose great regret is that he/she did not move away from PI sooner in life. Our Heavenly Father wants to do this work in many people.

With God's help and truth from His Word, a believer in Jesus Christ can live with greater personal responsibility in our homes, neighborhoods, schools, jobs, churches, organizations, and within our various interpersonal relationships. A note of caution is appropriate. A steep price will be paid to become accountable and take responsibility, but the ultimate benefits will far outweigh any costs.

Ask yourself this question, "What if I became a person of sincere personal responsibility and joined others in this quest with God's help and Word which gives us light and truth?" Our churches and communities would then become more positively contagious, faithful, and reverent. Then we can focus on basic issues like family, respect, goodness, blessings, and joy.

Those words are shorter and easier to spell than irresponsibility, and they are more desperately needed in our churches and communities.

Buckles is president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention and senior pastor of First Church, Vicksburg.

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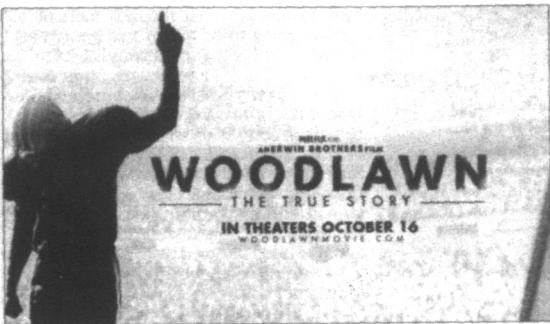
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Woodlawn stirring hearts of faith-based motion picture fans

NASHVILLE (BP) — The faith-based motion picture drama, *Woodlawn*, opened in the top 10 at theaters Oct. 16-18, Box Office Mojo reported.

Woodlawn opened in the eighth spot Oct. 16, earning \$1.485 million in 1,553 theaters, and finished the weekend at number nine, earning a total of \$4.1 million, Box Office Mojo said.

Based on the true story of a high school football team in the midst of racial integration 40 years ago in Birmingham, Al., the film follows the journey of African American Tony Nathan as a star running back for the *Woodlawn* High School Colonels in 1973 after court-ordered desegregation.

Amid racial hatred, cross burnings, and riots, spiritual revival transforms the team so profoundly that it affects the team's coach, school, and community.

Jon and Andy Erwin, known for the movies *October Baby* and *Mom's Night Out*, wrote, directed and produced the film along with producer Kevin Downes and executive producers Roma Downey and Mark Burnett.

"It's a special film that's really going to touch the lives of many people across the country and around the world," Downes said. "I think it transcends different backgrounds in such a way that it can bring healing. People have separation and brokenness in their lives and this film can really help people in ways that are unexpected."

Southern Baptist Convention President Ronnie Floyd has promoted the film as a tool for revival.

"I want to encourage each pastor and Christian leader

to rent theaters and fill them with people of all ages to watch this movie," Floyd said before the film's release. "Encourage them to bring friends who are regular church attenders and those who have never attended a church before."

"Once the movie concludes, offer an opportunity for people to follow Jesus Christ."

Three books accompanied the movie's release:

- *Woodlawn: Dare to Believe.*
- *Touchdown Tony: Running With a Purpose.*
- *When God Shows Up.*

Woodlawn was released seven weeks after the Kendrick Brothers' movie, *War Room*, which grossed \$65.4 million through Oct. 18 on a budget of only three million dollars, Box Office Mojo said. Featuring Bible teachers Priscilla Shirer and Beth Moore in a story illustrating the power of a disciplined and focused prayer life, *War Room* continues to show in hundreds of theaters across the country, according to the movie's website.

Captive, the faith-based story of Atlanta hostage Ashley Smith who read from Rick Warren's bestseller, *A Purpose Driven Life* and convinced her captor to surrender, grossed \$2.6 million in a three-week run which ended Oct. 8, according to Box Office Mojo figures.

Woodlawn was a distant fourth among new releases, trailing the secular movies *Goosebumps*, which earned \$7.4 million; *Bridge of Spies*, \$5.4 million, and *Crimson Peak*, \$5.3 million, Box Office Mojo reported.

"It's a special film ... I think it transcends different backgrounds in such a way that it can bring healing. People have separation and brokenness in their lives and this film can really help people in ways that are unexpected."

Kevin Downes, *Woodlawn* producer

Rich outpouring encourages returning IMB missionaries

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — International Mission Board (IMB) missionaries and staff are expressing thanks for the way Southern Baptists have stepped up to provide offers of housing, vehicles, and job opportunities to missionaries who have accepted IMB's voluntary retirement incentive.

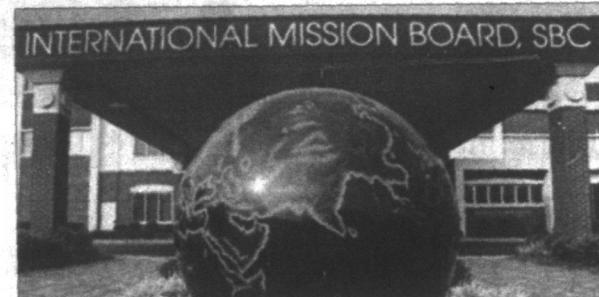
"Southern Baptists are not only catching the ball, they are running 99-yard touchdowns," said one missionary serving in Asia. "...I am praying that people will see what Southern Baptists are doing and will see His glory."

Offers of practical support have come from a variety of individuals, churches, associations, state conventions, and seminaries, said Clyde Meador, who leads IMB's transition team. This practical support will help returning missionaries who are discerning their "next step."

"The majority [of missionaries accepting the retirement incentive] are seeking God's leadership for what, where and when," said Meador, whose team is personally speaking with each missionary accepting the incentive. "They are living firmly in the confidence that God led them to take a step, but they don't know what's next."

To help returning missionaries determine their next steps, IMB's transition team recently created a database to manage the list of housing, employment, and other offers sent by state conventions, local churches, Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) entities, and other sources.

The Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) auxiliary of the SBC, which maintains a database of missionary housing in their Birmingham headquarters that covers 27 states, also is extending a push to make churches aware of



the needs of returning missionaries. WMU is offering to counsel individuals, churches, and associations who want to learn more about starting a missionary house ministry. The organization has also posted a number of job opportunities at its home office in Birmingham for returning missionaries.

"This is a very kind and gracious gesture to our returning missionary personnel," said Terri Willis, IMB director of national relations and a member of the transition team.

North American Mission Board (NAMB) trustees also voted Oct. 7 to reduce NAMB's budget by four million dollars and transfer the money to IMB. While the SBC Executive Committee in Nashville must approve the proposal before funds are transferred to IMB, NAMB trustee chairman Chuck Herring called the unanimous decision by NAMB trustees a "Kingdom vote."

IMB President David Platt expressed appreciation for NAMB's gesture of support. "Needless to say, I was overwhelmed when I heard that the trustees of the North American Mission Board approved a four million dollar budget reduc-

tion in order to send those funds to the International Mission Board."

"This extremely generous gift will go a long way in helping IMB get to a healthy financial place in the present so that we can move forward into a future marked by more missionaries sent, more disciples made, and more churches planted among unreached peoples than ever before."

Platt announced the voluntary retirement incentive Aug. 27 as part of a plan to balance IMB's budget. The incentive is the first of two phases to reduce IMB field missionaries and staff by 600 to 800 people in response to revenue shortfalls.

The incentive has been offered to missionaries and home office staff who are at least 50 years old with five years of service.

A second phase focuses on concluding a reset of the organization and includes consolidating support services, recalibrating mobilization, assessing global engagement, and re-envisioning training.

Individuals and organizations interested in providing housing, vehicles, jobs, or other means of support to help returning missionaries can e-mail transitionteam@imb.org.

Not impressed with recent Playboy decision, say Christian leaders

NASHVILLE (BP) — Playboy's decision to remove nude photos from the U.S. print edition of its magazine in no way suggests the company is moving away from the objectification and exploitation of women, critics say.

"This decision was not a moral one, it was purely business," said Charles Beeghley, a Missouri pastor whose proposal to the Resolutions Committee at this summer's annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) prompted a convention statement on pornography and sexual purity. "It is their attempt to redesign a failing magazine and little more, and if selling nudity becomes profitable again, it will find its way again into the publications."

Beeghley, pastor of Blue Summit Church in Kansas City, told Baptist Press (BP) in written comments, "The content may not have nude women, but it will still see women as objects of sex as well as sexual desire."

In announcing the move away from full nudity, Playboy Enterprises CEO Scott Flanders told The New York Times that naked pictures in a magazine are "just passé at this juncture" because on the Internet "you're now one click away from every sex act imaginable for free."

Beginning in March, the magazine "will look more like" popular periodicals "that carry PG-13-type pictures," the Associated Press reported. International editions of the magazine will continue to car-

ry nude photos though Playboy's website has been nude-free since August 2014, AP noted.

The move away from full nudity online was followed by a 400% increase in monthly unique visitors to Playboy's website, according to AP. The company hopes similar results will follow for its print edition, which decreased in circulation from 5.6 million in 1975 to some 800,000 today, according to The Times.

The SBC resolution on pornography and sexual purity, adopted at the convention's June annual meeting in Columbus, Ohio, expressed "deep grief over the widespread devastation inflicted by the pornography industry" as well as commitment to "purity in thought, word, and deed."

It is the time of year when bitterweeds and goldenrods seem to be at their glorious peak. I passed by a field the other day and it looked like someone had planted bitterweeds all across their pasture. I seriously doubt that they had, but they sure had a crop. If it was a cash crop, they would be sitting pretty. The problem is there's not a need for bitterness or bitterweeds. I remember as a youngster hearing people talk about the bitterweeds and their efforts to keep the cows away from the bitterweeds, because it made for bitter milk. If you've never taken a big gulp of milk tainted with that bitterness, you have missed one of life's treats and for that you can be thankful.

As a youngster I remember my parents bought milk from a family in our church that had several cows and sold milk to the neighbors. I do not remember it ever being anything but good until one morning we sat down to breakfast and almost simultaneously several of us took a gulp of milk only to respond with a gag. What in the world was wrong with the milk? Well, the milk was bitter because the cow had only passed on what she had taken in. The people from whom we had gotten the milk were so apologetic for they had discovered the same thing as they drank their own milk. Furthermore, they had already done an investigation and found the source of the tainted, bitter milk. One cow had gotten out of the pasture into a neighbor's pasture that was filled with bitterweeds. Apparently, she had eaten her fill and when they milked their other few cows all of it went into the same vat which ruined all the milk for everyone. It was the only time I ever tasted any milk laced with bitterweeds, but amazingly until this day I remember the taste. Occasionally when I drink some milk, before Igulp it down I think about that moment and I take a sip before I take a gulp.

I do not know if they have bitterweeds in the Holy Land, but I know this — the writers of Scripture and the Lord himself knew a great deal about bitter-



Bitterweeds

ness. Water that was bitter. People that were bitter. It's found everywhere. In the midst of Job's difficulties, he said, "My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul" (Job 10:1). Like Job, you may feel like doing the same thing.

The writer of Proverbs describes the difficulties that parents have in raising children, and in speaking of a difficult son said, "A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him" (Prov. 17:25). Children are a blessing but at times they, like we when we were kids, can be of bitterness to the parents.

The Apostle Paul writes to all of us and says, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice" (Eph. 4:31). Obviously, in the Christian's life and the church as a whole, bitterness is a destructive and harmful thing. It is in that significant passage of Hebrews 12:15 that the Scripture says, "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled." It seems that bitterweeds can speak volumes to those of us who know the Lord and seek to serve in His Kingdom. Three significant

things come out of the bitter milk that I once drank.

One, it is larger than just the one who got bitter. It was one cow that got in the wrong pasture but all of the cows who were giving good milk were tainted by the one, for it was all in the same vat. Isn't it amazing how in a congregation of 100 or 1,000, one or two or three people can develop such a bitterness of spirit that everyone is affected, hurt, and can taste the bitterness in their own souls? The fact is sour people, sour people. Generally speaking, the sourness just gets spread in an ever-enlarging circle. A dear, old, wise pastor friend of mine years ago was talking about a church that was having some difficulties and he said, "Jim, you need to remember this. The more you stir a stink, the stinkener it gets." Well, I thought that was kind of country and corn pone but it was absolutely true. There are some people who, rather than providing hope and health and nourishment and strength of sweet milk, seem to always offer up the newest taste of bitterness. That is not of God.

The second thing that I would note about the bitterweed experience is that it lingers. Decades have gone by. Gallons of milk have been consumed but I still remember, think about,

and wonder whether the next taste of milk is going to be bitter. I've known of people who have gone through a bitter experience in life and never gotten over it. I've known of people in church who tasted the bitterness of wrong decisions or wrong actions or wrong treatment, only to face decades of living with the bitterness. They may even withdraw from fellowship and participation, even stop attending worship services, because the bitterness they tasted many years ago has been allowed to control their lives into the present. It lingers for a long time.

The third thing I would suggest to you is that it can be lifted, taken away, cleansed, cured, and removed. The cow that caused all the problems with the bitterweed was kept in a good pasture with lush green grass until all the process of passing on the bitterness was gone. In the meantime, the other cows could go on producing healthy, wholesome milk, and later the offending cow was able to rejoin the herd.

Please do not interpret this narrative to suggest that I'm calling you or me an old cow or an old bull. The truth is that probably all of us have known bitterness in our lives. It may have come to us from others or we may have been the one who was distributing it. Either way or in any way, it doesn't need to be a part of our lives. It is true from a spiritual standpoint that it is extremely difficult to be a blessing while you live in the bitterness mode. In fact, it is hard to even be blessed by God if you're not willing to allow Him to deal with the bitterness in you and remove it.

You do not need to be bitter. You need to let God bring you into blessings. You do not need to spread bitterness because as you do, you will eventually become the recipient of your own bitterness. Turn from it. Look to God. Leave it with Him. Look forward to opportunities, ways, and godly direction so that you can be a blessing.

The author can be contacted at directions@mbcb.org.

College and Seminary News



In other College and Seminary News:

- **New Orleans Seminary** is hosting Equipped to Care, a conference on adoption, Nov. 6 - 7. Speakers include Bruce & Denise Kendrick, John Fuller, and Mary Landrieu; registration by Oct. 30, \$30; register at nobs.edu/events/equippedtocare.html.
- **Puckett Church, Puckett**, is hosting a Blue Mountain College preview event 5 p.m. Oct. 25, with president Barbara Childers McMillin. RSVP: facebook.com/bmcofms or bmcofms@gmail.com.

BLUE MOUNTAIN COLLEGE PREVIEW EVENT

featuring Blue Mountain College President,
Dr. Barbara Childers McMillin

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, 5:00 PM
PUCKETT BAPTIST CHURCH - PUCKETT, MISSISSIPPI

RSVP: facebook.com/bmcofms or bmcofms@gmail.com

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EL NASN NV NATT? PVYYVM NAVO DT.

ZVAC NMTCNJ-VCT: NMTCNJ-NMV

Clue: Z = J

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: James Four: Eight

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004. © 2005

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HouseTops.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

October 22, 2015

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.



BE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND

YEC 2015 YOUTH EVANGELISM CHALLENGE

December 28-29, 2015
Mississippi College

Registration Begins:
Monday, Dec. 28 at 1:30 p.m.

Challenge Concludes:
Tuesday, Dec. 29 at 12:30 p.m.

Preregister online
www.yec2015.com

Also featured: Youth Missions, Discipleship, Missions, and more!

ALSO SPECIAL TRAINING FOR ADULT LEADERS
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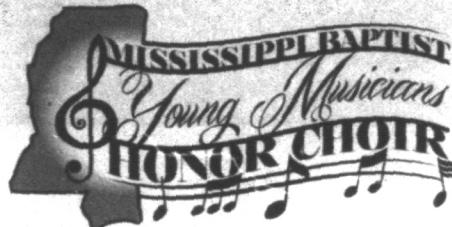


Scan the QR code to register online!

Contact the Discipleship/Family Ministry Dept. at the
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board for more info.
redwards@mbcb.org | 601-292-3283



Mississippi Baptist Young Musicians Honor Choir Weekend



Saturday, April 9 - Sunday, April 10, 2016
First Baptist Church of Clinton

Begin submitting video auditions August 1, 2015
Deadline: November 15, 2015

For more information, contact
Wyndy South, Church Music Dept.,
at wsouth@mbcb.org

SIDE by SIDE

SMALL GROUP SUNDAY SCHOOL

Ever wonder how it might work to have both Sunday School and Small Groups? Ken Braddy and Rick Howerton - both of LifeWay are coming to Mississippi to share just how these two dynamic ministry tools can work Side by Side.

Hold a date...
Tuesday, November 10 - NorthStar Church, Sartell
Wednesday, November 11 - Grace Crossing Church, Canton
Thursday, November 12 - William Carey University, Hattiesburg

Times in all three locations:

9 A.M. - NOON

No cost, No child care

Please register at mbcb.org/sidebyside to ensure your resources.

Sponsored by: Sunday School & Small Groups & LifeWay Christian Resources.

For more information contact the Sunday School & Small Groups Department of the MBCB at 800-748-1651, Ext. 291.

Breakfast

AMD Seminary Extension Directors Breakfast
October 27, 2015 8:00 a.m.
Baptist Building Chapel
Contact Pastor Leadership Development Dept. at
800-748-1651 for more information

Ministers' Wives CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 26, 2015
FBC, JACKSON
5TH FLOOR

We welcome Diana Davis as our speaker. She enjoys encouraging ministry wives and training women in church leadership. Diana is a minister's wife, for over 32 years. Minister's wife of Steve Davis, vice president of SBC's NAMB, South region, her newest publication is "6 Simple Steps: Find Contentment & Joy as a Minister's Wife." Ministers' wives are welcome to join us for an afternoon of great fellowship and fulfillment.



Sponsored by the Pastor/Leadership Development Dept.
Register by contacting Cathy Taylor at cwtaylor@mbcb.org.

Merry Christmas!

To pastors in the Baptist Convention of New York through the Suit Project ministry.

Every year we seek to bless pastors and their wives with gifts, sending pastors new suits and their wives gift cards. This ministry has been blessing ministers and their families since 1963. Join in making the holidays even more special for these ministers by giving to the suit project. Donations to this ministry can be a rewarding fundraising project for any group in your church: Royal Ambassadors, Girls in Action, WMU, Men's Ministry, VBS, or youth.

To make donations, or for more information, contact the Men's Ministry Department of the MBCB at 800-748-1651, Ext. 335, 601-292-3335, or E-mail dvail@mbcb.org.

IGNITE

March 4-5, 2016

Garaywa Camp & Conference Center

IGNITE is a missions weekend for ALL girls
7th - 12th grades and their leaders.

(Formerly known as the Mississippi Action Convocation or MAC)

IGNITE will allow participants to experience:

- Missionary Speakers
- Breakout Sessions
- Fellowship with other girls
- Praise and Worship
- Mission Projects

Cost: \$12.50 program fee
plus, Garaywa meals & lodging

Schedule: Friday: 5:30 p.m. Check-in
6:30 p.m. Dinner
7:30 p.m. Worship

Saturday: 7:45 a.m. Breakfast
12:15 p.m. Lunch
5:00 p.m. Dinner

DEADLINE to REGISTER
February 19, 2016

Contact the WMU Office at
spruitt@mbcb.org or 800-748-1651 ext. 323

Bivocational/Small Church Ministers & Wives Council Meeting

October 26, 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Baptist Building
Skyroom

For more information contact the
Pastor/Leadership Development Dept. of the
MBCB at 800-748-1651.

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2016

JANUARY 31 - FEBRUARY 1

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*"..the fields are white already to harvest!
john 4:35"*



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Three Day Camp:

June 30 - July 2

July 11 - 13

July 14 - 16

July 25 - 27

July 28 - 30

Cost \$150

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July 6 - 9

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Cost \$175

July 18 - 22

Lad/Dad Weekend

Cost \$42.50

July 22 - 23

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Shane Thrash, camp manager | shanethrash@mbcb.org

Last Chance Camp

August 1 - 3

Kid's Camp

June 20 - 22

June 23 - 25

June 27 - 29

Questions:

MS Kid's Camps contact:
Jo Wesson, 601-292-3296
jwesson@mbcb.org

Connect Camp

June 6 - 9

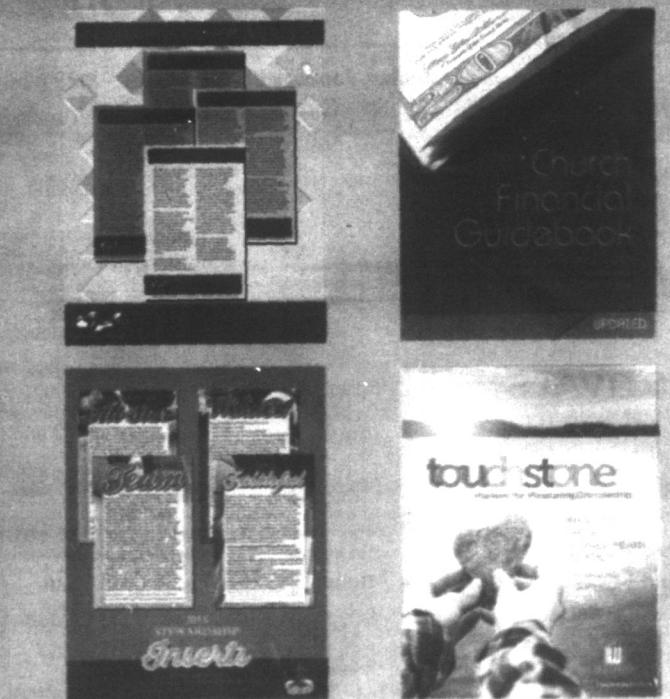
June 9 - 12

June 14 - 17

Questions:

Connect Camps contact:
Rene Edwards, 601-292-3293
redwards@mbcb.org

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Pray this day for...

October 23 - November 12, 2015

"praying at all times in the Spirit...To that end keep alert with perseverance, making supplication for all the saints..."

Ephesians 6:18 (ESV)

23
Pray for: Thomas & Bonnie Hearon, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through strategy coordination.

24
Pray for: Earl & Ramona Hewitt, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through medicine, church/home outreach & evangelism.

25
Pray for: Raymond & Cynthia Hodges, missionaries ministering to Deaf Peoples through church/home outreach & sports evangelism.

26
Pray for: Jeffery & Liessa Holman, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through strategy coordination.

27
Pray for: Janet Holloway, missionary ministering to European Peoples through student evangelism.

28
Pray for: Clarence Frank & Phoebe Harrison, missionaries ministering to American Peoples.

29
Pray for: Kenneth & Kimberly Harthcock, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church/home outreach & student evangelism.

30
Pray for: Millard Jones, missionary ministering to East Asian Peoples through student evangelism.

31
Pray for: Susan Jones, missionary ministering to East Asian Peoples through student evangelism.

Pray for: John & Melinda Kyzar, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through personalizing, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: Timothy & Rebecca Lightsey, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through church/home outreach, evangelism & strategy coordination.

Pray for: Asbury & Jeannie Martin, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: Robert & Janice Mooney, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church/home outreach, evangelism & strategy coordination.

Pray for: Kevin & Brenda Peacock, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through theological education, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: John & Sarah Perkins, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church planting, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: Michael & Sarah Prewitt, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through mission support, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: Eugenia & Tracy Putnam, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church planting.

Pray for: Steven & Nickolee Roberts, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through church planting, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: Stephen & Svetlana Parish, missionaries ministering to North African & Middle Eastern Peoples through church/home outreach & evangelism.

The IMB missionaries listed in the HouseTops prayer calendar are currently active in 2-4 year terms or in career service.

Thursday, January 28, 2016 | 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Area 2 Calvary BC, 501 W. Main St., Tupelo, 38804

Doug Spires

C-662-842-3338

2016

AREA

KEYBOARD

FESTIVALS

For more information

contact Wyndy South,
Church Music Dept.
wsouth@mbcb.org.

Area 2 FBC, 106 E. Lampkin St., Starkville, 39759

Tom Jenkins

C-662-323-5633

Area 3 FBC, 431 N. State St., Jackson, 39201

Wyndy South

O-601-292-3272
O-1-800-748-1651

Area 4 Poplar Springs Dr. BC, 4032 Poplar Springs Dr., Meridian, 39305

Michael Gibson

C-601-485-5106

Area 5 Carterville BC, 11125 Carterville Rd., Petal, 39465

Kristopher Smith

C-601-584-9457

Area 5 FBC, Columbia, 900 High School Ave., Columbia, 39429

Hugh Plunkett

C-601-736-2608

Area 5 FBC, 902 Live Oak Ave., Pascagoula, 39567

John White

C-228-762-2343

Area 5 FBC, 607 W. 5th St., Laurel, 39442

Marilyn Huff

H-601-763-8731

Friday, January 29, 2016 | 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Area 1 Longview Heights BC, 4501 Goodman Rd., Olive Branch, 38654

Blake Krumalis

Cell-662-404-3069

Saturday, January 30, 2016 | 9:30 a.m. - noon

Area 1 Emmanuel BC, 245 Meadowbrook Rd., Grenada, 38901

Barry Worrell

C-662-226-5316

Area 1 North Greenwood BC, 615 Grand Blvd., Greenwood, 38930

Patricia Ethridge

C-662-453-2801

CLASSIFIEDS

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MS POSITIONS

FBC MENDENHALL IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR A FULL-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC. Please send resume to PO Box 366 Mendenhall, MS 39114 or email to swarren@fbcmendenhall.org

SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCH IN MERIDIAN SEEKING QUALIFIED PERSON FOR CHURCH/FINANCIAL SECRETARY. Serious inquiries only. Email cover letter, resume and letters of reference to: meridanchurchsecretary@gmail.com

BIGGERSVILLE FBC IN ALCORN COUNTY IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR. Send resumes to 443 CR 514, Rienzi, MS 38685 or email bpmelms@gmail.com

VALLEY GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH IN PONTOTOC, MS IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL YOUTH MINISTER. Please submit resume to VGBC, 133 Drive 57, Tupelo, MS 38801 or email to dkstewartjr@gmail.com

CORINTH BAPTIST CHURCH OF MAGEE, MS IS NOW ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR THE YOUTH MINISTER POSITION TILL DECEMBER 7TH. Those interested please send your resume to: Corinth Baptist Church, attn: Youth Search Committee, 207 Church Rd, Magee, MS 39111.

BLYTHE CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH, CHOCTAW ASSOCIATION, IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER TO STUDENTS. Email resumes to the Student Minister Search Committee at mcbcmayo@yahoo.com

LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH IN FLOWOOD IS SEEKING A MINISTER OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES. Please submit resumes to Liberty Baptist Church, 5198 Lakeland Drive, Flowood, MS 39232 or email to office@lbcflowood.org

GOSS BAPTIST CHURCH, COLUMBIA, MS IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR A MUSIC MINISTER THROUGH OCTOBER 31, 2015. Please send resumes to 20 Mark McArthur Dr., Columbia, MS 39429 ATTN: Music Search Committee or email to markmc26@att.net.

GOSS BAPTIST CHURCH IN COLUMBIA, MS IS SEEKING A PART-TIME YOUTH MINISTER. Please send resumes attention Youth search committee to 20 Mark McArthur Drive, Columbia, MS 39429 or online at markmc26@att.net

HIGHLAND BAPTIST IN SENATOBIA, MS IS TAKING RESUMES FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS: Part-Time Secretary, Part-Time Minister of Students/Youth and College age) Part-Time Music Minister. Send to Highland Baptist Church, Attn: Search Comm., P.O. Box 425, Senatobia, MS 38668 or via email to Pastor@hbcsenatobia.com

FBC PEARL IS LOOKING FOR A PART-TIME MUSIC MINISTER. Experience in leading Choir and Praise Teams, blended services. Email resume to scottcrawford01@msn.com \$250.00 a week

NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH IN MONTICELLO, MS IS SEEKING A PART-TIME YOUTH MINISTER. You may call 601-320-2785 for more information.

MURPHY CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH IS SEEKING A PART-TIME MINISTRY ASSISTANT. Please send resumes to the church at 5420 Bond Road, Louisville, MS 39339. Resumes will be accepted through October 31, 2015. They can also be emailed to mcbcmayo@yahoo.com

COPIAH COUNTY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION SEEKING PART-TIME ASSOCIATION MISSION DIRECTOR. Please send Resumes to: Mr. Larry Papizan, Copiah County Baptist Association, P.O. Box 230, Hazlehurst MS 39083.

THE TRI-COUNTY BAPTIST MISSION (LAWRENCE, MARION, AND WALTHALL BAPTIST ASSOCIATIONS) IS RECEIVING RESUMES FOR THE POSITION OF ASSOCIATE ASSOCIATIONAL MISSIONS DIRECTOR through October 31, 2015. Resumes can be mailed to PO Box 350, Columbia MS 39429 (attention Executive Committee), or emailed to tricitybaptistmissions@gmail.com.

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First Person: Join us as we celebrate racial reconciliation

By Ronnie Floyd
Southern Baptist
Convention president

Jerry Young, president of the National Baptist Convention, USA, and pastor of New Hope Church in Jackson, and I will lead A National Conversation on Racial Unity in America, in Jackson on Nov. 4, as part of the annual Mission Mississippi Racial Reconciliation Celebration.

He and I spoke at another recent Mississippi celebration to promote racial unity called Stronger Together, on Aug. 25 at the First Church, Jackson. It was an incredible night, one of my most memorable as president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

Jerry Young leads the largest predominantly African-American Christian denomination in the United States. This denomination is comprised of 31,000 congregations and 7.5 million members.

He and I are each asking 10 local church pastors from across America in our respective conventions to join us in this national conversation on racial unity. We are thankful for every leader or group who is attempting to address this national crisis. Yet, we believe local church pastors and churches can bring a unique perspective on the racial crisis and in reality, we need to lead the way toward addressing and resolving this crisis.

The 10 pastors representing the Southern Baptist Convention who will join me include:

■ K. Marshall Williams, president, National African American Fellowship of the SBC and senior pastor of Nazarene Church, Philadelphia, Pa.

■ Steve Gaines, senior pastor of Bellevue Church, Cordova, Tenn.

■ A.B. Vines, former president of the National African American Fellowship of the SBC and senior pastor, New Seasons Church, Spring Valley, Ca.

■ Ted Traylor, senior pastor of Olive Church, Pensacola, Fla.

■ Marshall Blalock, senior pastor of First Church Charleston, Charleston, S.C.

■ Ed Litton, Redemption Church, North Mobile, Ala.

■ Timmy Chavis, chairman of the Multi-Ethnic Advisory Council of the SBC and senior pastor of Bear Swamp Church, Pembroke, N.C.

■ Paul Kim, Asian American relations consultant for the SBC and pastor emeritus of Antioch Church in Cambridge, Mass.

■ Felix Cabrera, director of Red 1:8 Church Planting Network and lead pastor of Iglesia Bautista Central in Oklahoma City, Ok.

■ Gene Henderson, retired pastor of First Church, Brandon and a leader at Pinelake Church in Brandon.



TOGETHER AGAIN — Ronnie Floyd (left), president of the Southern Baptist Convention and senior pastor of multi-campus Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, listens as Jerry Young, president of the National Baptist Convention USA, and pastor of New Hope Church in Jackson, speaks at the standing-room-only Stronger Together racial unity celebration on Aug. 25 at First Church, Jackson. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Please pray for each of these men and their role on Nov. 4. Also pray for the 10 pastors from the National Baptist Convention who will join Jerry Young.

action-celebration to learn more. We would love to meet you.

God is moving

In December 2013, I was in a meeting in Atlanta for prayer and spiritual awakening. We were discussing the need for growing and strengthening relationships between all races and ethnicities. Marshall Williams stated to us, "Southern Baptists must reach out and begin having conversations with our brothers with the National Baptist Convention."

I never forgot what he said with great passion and conviction. When I was elected president of the Southern Baptist convention, I began praying for open doors. Through prayer gatherings, I began to see God bring down the walls that divide races and ethnicities. Then, sadly through the tragedies of Ferguson and other cities in our nation, the burden and conviction became overwhelming.

In the final half of 2014 when racial tension and violence was increasing exponentially, I released an article entitled, The wounds run deep: Racism and injustice must end and let grace and love begin. This article opened doors into spiritual conversations and experiences.

God used this article to open doors that lead us to these two experiences on Nov. 4 in Jackson. Our own national prayer meeting at the 2015 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Columbus, Ohio, highlighted the need for racial unity and was a catalyst to this opportunity in Jackson. May God use it to His glory. Pray for us. Join us.



WINTERS

Neddie Winters is the president of Mission Mississippi. Their mission is to encourage and demonstrate grace in the body of Christ across racial lines, so that communities throughout Mississippi

can see practical evidence of the Gospel message.

Mission Mississippi believes that through Christ, we can find common ground to build strong relationships and communities for the betterment of all Mississippians, regardless of race. Their vision is, "To be the leading resource and catalyst for Christian racial reconciliation and healing for Mississippi and the world."

The luncheon will take place in sections C, D, and E of the ballroom of the Jackson Convention Complex. Tickets are available. If you would like to join us for this luncheon, please visit missionmississippi.net/racial-reconciliation.

Floyd is senior pastor of multi-campus Cross Church in northwest Arkansas. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for style.

Scheduled Miss. Baptist Convention-Related Activities

October 26

■ Mississippi Baptist Christian Educators Fellowship and Luncheon. First Church, Jackson Christian Life Center Dining Room. 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

■ Pastor's Conference. Luncheon: First Church, Jackson Christian Life Center Auditorium. 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. First Session: First Church, Jackson-Sanctuary; 1:15-4:30 p.m. Second Session: First Church, Jackson-Sanctuary; 6:00-8:30 p.m.

■ Ministers' Wives Conference. First Church, Jackson-Fifth Floor. 1:30-3:00 p.m.

■ Mississippi Council on Bivocational/Small Church Ministries Meeting. Baptist Building-Skyroom. 3-4:45 p.m.

■ Acts 1:8 Celebration Dinner (reservations required, lmarler@mbcb.org). First Church, Jackson-Fellowship Hall West. 4:45-6:00 p.m.

1:30- 4:40 p.m. Third Session: 6:30-8:00 p.m.

■ Health Fair. First Church, Jackson Fellowship Hall East stage. 8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

■ Southwestern Seminary Alumni Luncheon (advance ticket purchase required, archie_herrin@att.net). First Church, Jackson-Christian Life Center/rooms 307-308. Noon.

■ New Orleans Seminary Alumni Association Luncheon (pay at door). First Church, Jackson-Fellowship Hall West; noon-1:30 p.m.

■ William Carey University Alumni Dinner. First Church, Jackson-Parlor. 4:30-6:30 p.m.

■ Blue Mountain College Alumni Dinner (tickets available at college's exhibit in First Church, Jackson-Fellowship Hall East). First Church, Jackson-Christian Life Center Dining Room. 5 p.m.

October 27

■ Mississippi Baptist Convention. FBC, Jackson-Sanctuary. First Session: 8:30-11:30 a.m. Second Session:

October 28, 2015

■ Mississippi Baptist Convention. First Church, Jackson-Sanctuary. 8:30-11:35 a.m.- 4th Session.

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electroni-

cally via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted. Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lit. Photographs must depict people. No landscape-building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

COURT

cont. from p. 1

privileges at a nearby hospital in case a woman needs emergency hospitalization. The Texas law has the same type of requirement for abortion doctors but also mandates abortion clinics must meet the health and safety standards of other walk-in surgical centers. That law would reduce the number of abortion facilities in the state from what had been about 40 to fewer than 10.

The Fifth Circuit Court agreed with federal district judge Daniel P. Jordan in Jackson, who ruled in 2012 that Mississippi's law constituted an "undue burden" on a woman's access to abortion because the last clinic in the state would have to close. The appeals court, however, upheld the Texas law. The Supreme Court blocked implementation of the Texas law while the appeal process continues.

The high court established the "undue burden" standard on abortion in its 1992 Planned Parenthood v. Casey opinion, which permitted state regulations if they did not encumber women excessively. That ruling also reaffirmed the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision, which legalized abortion nationwide.

The ADF's Aden said questions in the Mississippi case include: "Is it an automatic undue burden in violation of Casey for a state to apply health and safety regulations that leave no clinic standing? Or can Mississippi rely on the availability of nearby abortion facilities across state lines, like in Memphis; Tuscaloosa, Ala.; New Orleans; and say that women can access it there?"

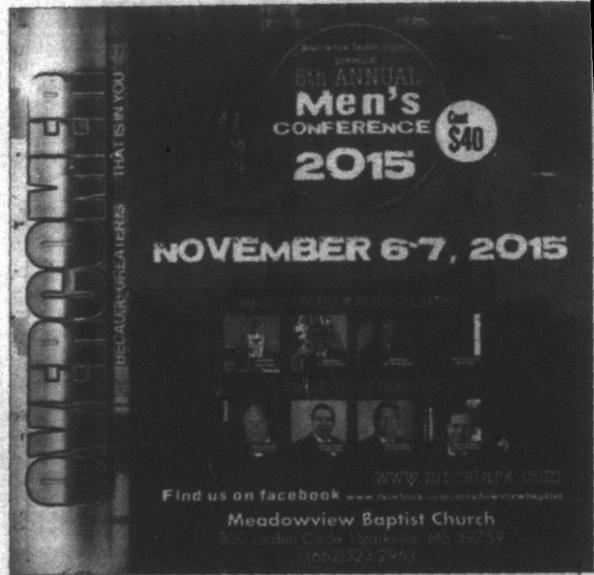
He told BP another question, "is whether Roe v. Wade and

Planned Parenthood v. Casey should be revisited by the Supreme Court."

"I don't think you're going to see a case in which the Supreme Court elevates availability of abortion over state regulation for health and safety, because then that would be tantamount to the

Supreme Court constitutionalizing back-alley abortion, he told BP.

These "reasonable, common-sense measures" in Mississippi and Texas "apply to all other forms of outpatient surgery," Aden said. "I think for that reason the Supreme Court will approve [the laws]."



Need a light?

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Waiting for the Promise • Genesis 15:1-7, 13-16

Abram may have believed God, but he also tried to assist God in having his promised heir. He suggested to the Lord that Eliezer, his trusted servant, would be his heir (Genesis 15:2). Abram must have thought that is what God meant, for after many years he and Sarai still were childless. Abram thought that God may had forgotten, but God was waiting until her pregnancy was obviously from God. God was judging the Amorites as well, and said their sin was not yet complete. God was still giving them a chance to repent (Genesis 15:16).

God let Abram know that his heir would be his biological offspring, and not his servant. God then made a covenant with Abram in Genesis 15. In ancient times, when one made an agreement, or covenant, with a King, it was called a Suzerainty Covenant. Since the King was powerful, the covenant would have been made publicly and was different from agreements between equals. This type of covenant was between a greater and a lesser. Say a man approached a King with a business deal, leasing land from the King for a percentage of the proceeds. If the King accepted the deal, he would have an animal brought in, slaughtered, and cut in half. What a mess! The lesser

in the deal would then walk between the two parts and the King would let him know that this would happen to him if he did not keep his end of the agreement. Drift received!

Yet in this covenant, God had Abram cut a heifer, a ram, and a goat in half. Genesis 15:17 reads, "And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace,



Explore the Bible with Rick Henson

and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces." (KJV). This covenant between God and Abram was certainly one between the greater and the lesser, yet God Himself, not Abram, walked between the slaughtered animals. Exodus 13:21 reads, "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, ..." (KJV). The message is clear: we cannot keep our end of the covenant, but God will pay the price Himself for

our failures. What a prophecy of God's substitutionary payment at Calvary for our sins! What a demonstration of God's amazing grace!

Genesis 15:18 reads, "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, 'Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.'" (KJV). The word used in this verse "made" a

covenant, is also translated "cut." So the Lord cut a covenant with Abram. Hebrews 9:22 reads, "And almost all things are by the law

purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission," (KJV). Isaiah 53:5 reads, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed," (KJV).

Covenants were confirmed by the shedding of blood. The blood of animals

shed in the Old Testament, however, could not pay for sins. Hebrews 10:11 reveals, "And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins," (KJV). The Lord Jesus, however, "...after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God," (Hebrews 10:12 KJV). The blood of Jesus is more than enough to pay for all of our sins, "and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world," (1 John 2:2 KJV). Jesus paid for all sins, "but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name," (John 1:12 KJV). All of this was prophesied in the covenant in Genesis 15.

Abram had to wait on the Lord's promise for a few years. His offspring had to wait for a few millennia for the redemption of Israel at the cross. God keeps His word. Romans 8:32 reads, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (KJV). Be patient!

Henson is pastor of Oakdale Church, Brandon.

Pray Fervently • Daniel 2:13-21, 26-28a

We've all been there. It could have been during the announcement time of a Sunday morning worship service, at Wednesday night prayer meeting, or during a call coming through on the prayer chain: "I have a special prayer request", someone announces. Our ears perk up, because the word "special" alerts us that the requester is going to share some serious or very significant information.

I've often wondered (tongue-in-cheek) if such petitions call for a different kind of praying. Are there run-of-the-mill requests and then "special" ones, ones that require us to make sure our sins are confessed, and that our intercessions have a more earnest tone... more fervency?

Whatever your thoughts on my musings, you'd probably agree that in today's focal Scripture, if Daniel were a good Baptist, he certainly would have recognized the dilemma he and his fellow servants faced as a "special prayer request".

Last week, we saw his courage, wisdom and faithfulness rewarded as he received permission to follow the Jewish dietary upbringing he embraced (Daniel 1). Chapter 2 picks up in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. The Babylonian king had some disturbing dreams (the plural use of the word could mean these were recurring over several days). He was so bothered by them, his sleep left him. Calling for those in the king-

dom known for their ability to interpret dreams, Nebuchadnezzar told them, "I have had a dream that troubles me, and I want to know what it means" (v. 3 NIV). Some Chaldean advisors encouraged the king to tell them the dream so they could interpret it. However, the king demanded more: "My decision is firm: if you do not make known the dream to me, and its interpretation, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made an ash heap" (v. 5 NKJV).

Although his advisors tried to convince the king that no body could do such a thing, Nebuchadnezzar was adamant; to make sure they weren't

just creating an answer to appease him (v. 9), they must describe the dream and interpret it. As they tried reasoning with the king, he became so furious, he ordered all the wise men in Babylon killed.

This proclamation included Daniel and his friends. When Arioch, captain of the king's guard, approached the four Hebrews, Daniel, with the utmost wisdom and tact, asked him to explain why

the king's edict was so harsh. Arioch detailed the situation, and Daniel then sought an audience with Nebuchadnezzar, asking for time, "that he might tell the king the interpretation" (v. 16). Going to his house, Daniel relayed the situation to his Hebrew friends, asking them to join him in seeking God's mercies. In a night vision, the Lord revealed the contents of the king's dream and its interpretation to Daniel.

Through this situation, the godly young man shows us a good model for victorious praying: he correctly ascertained the situation (v. 15), he enlisted prayer partners (vs. 17-18), he waited for God's response (v. 19), and he praised him for his answer (v. 20-23).

Through Arioch, Daniel again asked to see the king. He declared with confidence that "there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets" (v. 28), and who alone could unravel the dream's mystery. Verses 31-48 detail Daniel's response. Whereupon, King Nebuchadnezzar prostrated himself before his

young slave, saying, "Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret."

In "With the Word", author Warren Wiersbe shares his thoughts on this passage. "Daniel and his friends knew the 'God of heaven' who is merciful (v. 18), answers prayer (vv. 19-23; James 1:5), reveals secrets (v. 28), establishes rulers (v. 27), and will one day set up His kingdom (v. 44). Because the four men could come to God's throne, they had no fear of Nebuchadnezzar's throne."

Yes, indeed, the Lord is on His throne. He has rolled out the red carpet of welcome for those who love him. We can confidently bring our requests to him, knowing he has invited us to do exactly that. Hebrews 4:16 (NJKV) reminds us: "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

God encourages our faithful, fervent prayers. Who knows what "immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine" (Ephesians 3:20 NIV) blessings and barrier-breaking answers are waiting for those who act on the Lord's gracious offer!

Ann Maniscalco is a member of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Ocean Springs.

Revivals & Homecomings

► Longino Church, Philadelphia: Homecoming, Oct. 25; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by potluck lunch; Michael Wells, speaker.

► New Hope Church, Sumrall: 182nd anniversary; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by lunch and afternoon service; Mike Lee, speaker; Jeffrey Coulter, music.

► First Church, Potts Camp: Old-fashioned day/homecoming, Oct. 25, 9:45 a.m.; music, Southern Image; speaker, Chuck Fowler; buffet meal.

► Zion Hill Church, Wesson: Homecoming and note burning, Oct. 25, 10:30 a.m., followed by fellowship meal; Ken Hedgepeth, speaker; Tom McCormick, pastor.

► Sallis Church, Sallis: Homecoming and 175th anniversary, Oct. 25, 10:30 a.m.; Steve Jordan, speaker. Food, fellowship, and presentation of certificate by Anne Porter on behalf of the Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission.

► Glendale Church, Leland: 61st homecoming, Oct. 25;

Clyde Pullen, speaker; Chosen Road, music; potluck meal; Kevin Franklin, pastor; Michael Prestridge, minister of music.

► Union Ridge Church, Noxapater: 100th anniversary, Oct. 25; service, 10 a.m., followed by meal; past pastors and past music leaders recognized.

Just for the Record



OAK GROVE CHURCH, SMITH COUNTY, recognized John Barnes for 25 years as pastor. It is Barnes' 50th year in ministry. Shown are David Hays, Ginger Barnes, and John Barnes III.



UNION CHURCH, TYLERTOWN, held a GA recognition recently. Shown are Caroline Crawford, Samantha McNeil, Alison Trotter, Gracie Easley, Leah Kate Mallette, Belle McNeil, and Raini Sanford.



WEST END CHURCH, WEST POINT, recently ordained Brad Creely to the gospel ministry. Shown are Zack Creely, Alissa Creely, Suzanne Creely, Creely, and pastor Chris Layton.



Collin Brumfield, **FIRST CHURCH, VICKSBURG**, served as a NAMB GenSend intern with New Circle Church, Indianapolis for six weeks June - July. He is a first semester freshman at the University of Mississippi. Shown are Jeff Christopherson (NAMB Vice-President for Send North America), Brumfield, Keith Brumfield, and pastor Matt Buckles.



MORRISON CHAPEL CHURCH, CLEVELAND, recently licensed and ordained Earl McCown as a minister of the gospel. Shown are pastor John Arthur Thomas, Eloise McCown, and McCown.



SALEM CHURCH, TOOMSOOBA, awarded John Johnson his 55th pin for 55 years of perfect Sunday School attendance Oct. 11. Shown are Johnson and Sunday School director Melodie Black.

GRANDVIEW CHURCH, PEARL, celebrated Wade Chappell's 35th anniversary as pastor. Shown with Chappell is state representative Ray Rogers presenting a legislative proclamation. Steve Jackson led the service which was followed by dinner on the grounds.

In other Church News:

► **Main St. Church, Hatfieldburg,** is hosting a fall festival Oct. 28, 5 - 7 p.m. Free hot dogs, chips, drinks. Trunk or treat, games/jumpies for children, bake sale, and Main Street bazaar (homemade items.)

► **Bethel Church, Bogue Chitto,** is celebrating Senior Adult Day Oct. 25; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; service, 11 a.m., with Matthew Wallace speaking. Catered lunch to follow.

► **New Henleyfield Church, Carriere,** is hosting a fall festival Oct. 24, 4 - 6:30 p.m., followed by a hayride.

► **Shady Grove Church, Mize,** will hold Pastor Appreciation Day for pastor Rudy Jackson, Oct. 25, recognizing him for 10 years of service and dedication.

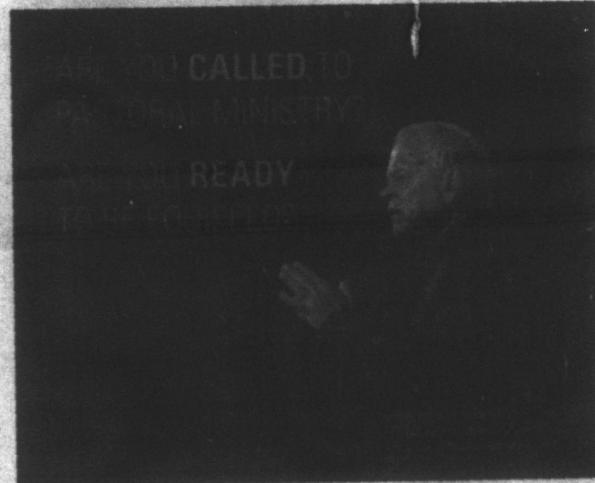
► **Beat Line Church, Philadelphia,** is hosting the Magnolia Boys in concert Oct. 24, 6 - 8 p.m.

► **Star Church, Star,** is presenting Judgment House Oct. 24, 4 - 9 p.m.; Oct. 25, 4 - 8 p.m.; Oct. 31, 4 - 9 p.m.; and Nov. 1, 4 - 8 p.m. Walk-ins welcome but reservations recommended. Not intended for children under 10. Call (601) 845-2736.

► **Shiloh Church, Big Creek,** is hosting a trunk or treat family fun night Oct. 28, 5:30 p.m., with games, refreshments, jumpers, and a best costume & best decorated trunk contest at 7 p.m. Admission, one canned good per person for the Calhoun Association food pantry.



BALA CHITTO CHURCH, PIKE ASSOCIATION, recently promoted Abby Schenk to the preteen Sunday School class. She is seen with new Sunday School director Evon Bynum.



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